[Shri R. L. Bhatia]

Governments have told Pakistan, that they are helping terrorists, it should not be done."

With regard to visas for Pakistan about which some of my friends have raised the point, it was also discussed with them. I also personally discussed because last time I had raised it strongly. When he called on me, he was positive and he said, "This policy is under review and we will look into the matter."

I think I have covered most of the points. Lastly, I will say, Mr. Vishvjit and another friend raised the point about our military detenus who are there. There are 54 people. Fifty-six security prisoners are also over there. We have raised this point in every meeting and we have raised this point even in this meeting, but they are denying. They are saying that they do not have Indian Prisoners. Still we have asked them, "Please, do look into the matter, see your jails again, review it and this matter will be discussed again in the next meeting. We are not leaving this point as it is."

So, with these words I think I have replied to the questions raised by hon. Members satisfactorily.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Honourable Members, I have to share a pleasant news with the House. Shri K. R. Narayanan has been elected as the Vice-President of India. I am sure the House joins me in offering him our very warm and hearty felicitations.

HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

AN HON. MEMBER: What is the number of votes?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): That will be known later.

Now, Half-an-Hour Discussion. Shri Viren J. Shah to raise a disccussion on points arising out of the answer given on the 22nd July 1992 to Unstarred Question No. 1376 regarding supply of gas to Tata Electric Company.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISUSSION—ON POINTS ARISING OUT OF ANSWER GIVEN ON 22ND JULY 1992 TO UNSTARRED QUESTION No. 1376 RE. SUPPLY OF GAS TO M|S. TATA ELECTRIC COMPANY

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am very proud and happy...

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान (आन्ध्र प्रदेश) : आलरेडी 6.40 हो चुके हैं.. **(व्यवधान)**

श्री वीरेन जे० शाह : जिसको नहीं बैठना वह जा सकते हैं ।

श्री मोहम्मद खलीलुर रहमान : नहीं-नहीं, यह क्या बात है... **(व्यवधान)**

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I am very happy and proud that I am beginning my Half-an-Hour Discussion when the announcement of the election of the Vice-President has been made in this House—and I am the first speaker after that. I also add my voice to the congratulations. Sir, this Half-an-Hour Discussion arises from a reply given in this House by the Minister for Petrolcum and Natural Gas to Unstarred Question No. 1376. Sir, I feel very sad to make this comment—and I made it once when the Prime Minister was present—that these days vague and inadequate replies have become a kind of habit and, unfortunately, the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas seems to take the cake. They specialize in not giving a straightforward and clear-cut answer to anything and to mislead. But I will begin with the answer first. That is why the Half-an-Hour Discussion has been raised, and I am sure the hon. Minister himself might be feeling uncomfortable that his officers prepare and give a kind of pad and reply which, if he was a Member, he would have found it extremely unacceptable, if I may say so. But the House is taken, if I may with great respect say, for a ride.

Now, the question was "(a), (b), (c), (d), (e), (f)"—*specific*—and the last one was, 'By when the gas supply is likely

to be restored?" In (d) and (e) the question was whether the representative of the Maharashtra Government had discussed the matter with his Ministry and what the results of the discussion were. To all that, in one sentence it has been said that the gas supply has been restricted due to a temporary constraint and that gas supplies to M|s. Tata Electric Company will be restored as soon as gas availability at Uran improves. Is anybody made wiser by this kind of a reply? What does "As soon as it improves" mean? Why is it essential to be raised? This question is essential because the whole power supply situation not only of Greater Bombay but of the State of Maharashtra—the grid system in Maharashtra—gets adversely affected.

Now let me narrate a couple of facts. One is that the Ministry had said—and the Ministry wanted to avoid the discussion also and I must bring it to your notice, Mr. Vice-Chairma, that the whole trend was not to allow the drscussion at all— and gain there is a vague reply. "As and when available, we will make it." But rectificatory measures are required for the gas and oil wells which have, perhaps, been run in a manner which has done more damage. And I am for that; you must rectify the wells. We have been talking about better gas and oil production. But the question is whether it would be done better or in time.

Now- comsng back to the specific question of the Tata Electric Company, the contract was to suuply 1.5 mcmd— million cubic metres per day—of gas. In July, it reached even up to 2.0 mcmd, and it has now come down to 0.6 mcmd. This is immediately causing a problem about power generation. What the Ministry has done is, they are offering LSHS oil—Low Sulphur Heavy Stock oil—for producing power there. But the reduction in the gas supply is such that the LSHS requirement would go up to 110,000 tonnes per month, while you are supplying only 60,000 tonnes per month. The impact of that is that the additional cost of generating this power on account of the additional use of the LSHS, will be Rs. 110 crores per month. Rs. 110 crores per month will be the additional cost of power generation, which will affect all the power consumers in Maharashtra. This has to be kept in mind.

Secondly, transporting this much quantity of LSHS from the Koyali refinery by the Western Railway to Bassein and then by transhipment on the Central Railway which has not yet started, is a very serious problem. When it comes by road—there is tremendous congestion in the whole Greater Bombay area by road transport—the additional movement of these trucks, of oil tankers and the resultant pollution on account of the additional movement of these trucks have also to be kept in mind. If it is to be done by rail ways, then, there are two problems—inadequate availability of tanker-wagons and the transhipment required at the Baslein Yard between the Western Railway and the Central Railway. It would require tremendous coordination which does not seem to be there right now. Also the usual practice with most Ministries and particularly, with great respect to my hon. friend, Shri Shankaranad the Ministry he heads, is that they think, "What does not concern my Mrnistry, is not my concern because the Railway Ministry has to do the transhipment." But it is the product of the Koyali refinery which is to be sent here in place of gas. Hence. I think it should be his concern to see that, if at all it has to go by rail, then. this coordination must take place.

One more factor that has happened is that because the quantity of LSHS to the required extent is not available, oil companies are offering fuel oil or furnace oil, and it is containing 20 times more sulphur than that in the LSHS, and there will be a very heavy impact in the Chembur area. This morning itself Chembur was considered as a highly critically polluted area. It wal mentioned by the hon. Minister for Environment. Thi,s woud add to that, and that has to be kept in mind. What happens?

[Shri Viren J. Shah]

Lastly, Mr. Vice-Chairman, the impact of this is that already in the last month, in the month of July, load-shedding was taking place four times a day in the Tata supply system, which is affecting the entire Maharashtra State Electricity Board system which was not happening before. Because of the inadequate availability of gas and of LSHS, this is so. Today, because of heavy rains, the demand for power by agriculturists is not there, but from October onwards the demand will increase for power. If today, with less demand, load-shedding takes place four times a day, one has just to imagine what kind of severity of the problem there would be from October onwards if steps are not taken to restore either the gas supply or other supplies.

And don't give such an extraordinarily vague answer as, "as and when the availability and arrangements are made," which I think, is an insult to the House. This, perhaps, the hon. Minister would like to see not only about this question but about all questions.

I have a couple of suggestions, and then I would have done. One is, the ONGC can reduce the time of recovery of oil wells. It is possible. Instead of taking two years or three years or four years, it is possible, and efforts should be made by the hon. Minister, to see that the ONGC does reduce that which will help the country as well.

Secondly, I will repeat, coordinate the railway supplies from the Koyali refineries with the LSHS so that adequate supplies go there.

The third is the question whether it is practicable, or it is possible or it is in the Larger national interest to spread over the shortage in supply of gas rather than only cutting the supply from the Tata Electric Company because it is a kind of residual gas that is being given to the Tata Electric Company for power generation. So, if there is a possibility of this without adversely affecting other vitally important sectors, the hon. Minister may consider that.

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI B. SHANKARANAND): The hon. Member has put forth the problem of TEC, rather than the real problem of gas supply. He has highlighted the problems of this Electric Company with regard to the gas supply to that company, regarding additional cost of getting the feed stock, the transport cost whether it is by rail or by road and other problems of the Tata Electric Company.

Because he has commented on the answers that I gave to Question No. 1376 on 22nd July, 1992, I wish to bring to the notice of the House the question that he put. He did not refer to the question so, I would read the entire question and the answer that I gave. That question runs into various parts. The first one deals with it.

> "(a) Whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news report published in the Financial Express of 3rd July, 1992 under the caption "ONGC cuts supply to Tata Electric?"

To this question, I said: Yes, Sir. I don't know what is wrong with the answer.

The second part of the question is:

> "(b) if so, what are the reasons therefor; and
>
> (c) whether it is a fact that the cut in gas supply to the TEC has resulted in cut in electricity supply in Bombay and other areas causing great inconvenience to public;
>
> (d) whether the representatives of the Maharashtra Government have recently approached his Ministry regarding the curtailment of gas to TEC;"
>
> (e) if so, what are the details of the discussions and the results thereof;"

Now, to his question, the hon. Member seems to have taken objection that I have not referrd to that part of the question, about holding discussions with the representatives of the Government of Maharash-

tra regarding the curtailment of gas to TEC.

My answer to his questions (b) to (e) was:

> "Gas supply to M/s. Tata Electric Company (TEC) has been restricted due to a temporary constraint of gas supplies at Urban and arrangements for alternative fuel to the extent of restriction in gas supply, have been made as M/s. TEC are designed to use alternative fuels for generation of power.

Now, this is the result of the representation made on behalf of the TEC and the action taken by the Ministry with regard to supply of feed-stock for generation of power.

Part (f) of his question says:

> "by when the gas supply to TEC will be restored as soon as gas availability at Urban improves."

I don't think there is anything wrong about it because...

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH (Maharashtra): That is the problem. You say there is nothing wrong about it. To a temporary constraint you could not specifically say that you would give within three months, six months or eight months. 'As and when' and 'as soon as' lead us nowhere. If you are satisfied about it, I think the House will have to consider how to go about it.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: I would like to inform the hon. Member, through you, Sir—I don not know whether he is aware of the terms of contract with the TEC on gas supply—that there is a specific reference of supply of gas to TEC and the main clause of this is:

> "This commitment will be fulfilled if the gas is available."

It is specific in the terms of contract. What wrong have I done when I said if the gas is available, I will supply? If the gas is not available...

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: "As and when" and temporary constraints" do not lead us anywhere. You should come to specifics of that.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): The Minister is answering. You hear him. After that if you have any doubt, you can ask him questions.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: This gas to TEC is supplied from Bombay High. Now, who are the other consumers, who are receiving from Bombay High? It will be very interesting for the hon. Member to know that...

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Fertilisers.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: I am coming. Now, the existing consumers of this Bombay High gas are: (1) Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers." That (2) RCF Trombay; (3) Deepak Fertilizers, (4) Bharat Electric Company Limited, (5) MSEB, (6) Hindustan Copper Limited, (7) BPCL; (8) HPCC, (9) MGCC—it is on fall-back and (10) HWP. These are the consumers of this gas. A question was raised, "why you have not been able to cut down the supply of gas to the other consumers and why only to Tata Electric Company." I think the House would be interested to know why it has been done. Out of all these consumers only Tatas have the arrangement of alternative fuel. If I could cut the supply of gas to the other units and supply it to Tatas, the production in other units would have suffered and they would have suffered to a large extent because they were not having any hope of getting gas from anywhere. They have no other system or arrangement for alternative fuel. Keeping in view the ability of Tatas to adjust themselves to the changing circumstances we have done it. In their project they themselves have envisaged and made a system whereby when there is a shortage of gas they can make use of alternative fuel. What have we done? We have not suddenly closed down the supply of gas. We have not completely curtailed the supply of gas. If you can

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see the supply of gas figures, You will about it. About the gas supply made available to the Tata Electric Company' right from 1978, it started with 0.66 million cubic metres per day. It went on till 1991. In 1992 it rose to 2.9 million cubic metres. In April, 1992 it was 2.96 million cubic metres. In May; 1992 it was 2.33 million cubic metres perday. In June' 1992 it was 1.76 million cubic metres perday. Now I do not know. What is the firm commitment? The firm commitment is not more than 1.5 million cubic metres perday. But still we have been giving more than 1.5 million cubic metres per day. Why? Not for the love of Tatas but in the interest of the country and in the interest of Maharashtra and the western part of Maharashtra. We thought that this should be done because we do not want to keep the gas for the pleasure of keeping it without being utilised. We have done it to ensure power generation. If it is available it can be made available to Tatas. That is why we have been supplying gas in more quantity than what was committed. It is not for the sake of fun that we have curtailed it. Since the health of certain oil-producing wells in which the associated gas is being produced in Bombay High had to be maintained; for the purpose of maintaining the health of the reservoirs; the ONGC thought it fit to close down certain wells. For the purpose of maintaining the natural health of the reservoirs they had to close down certain wells. It was not done all of a sudden. They gave notice to Tatas. The first notice was given on the 18th October, 1991 saying that the time has come that we may curtail supply of gas and "You please make your own arrangements." Thereafter we did give another notice in the month of May last. We have again reiterated that the time has come that we will not be able to supply the gas as per the contract. If the gas is available, we will supply it. But unfortunately the gas is not available. So we are going to curtail the supply of gas. We have told them that they should make their own arrangements. We did not stop at that point. Even on the 2nd June, we have again given a notice to them. Not only that; by giving a notice. we did not keep quiet. We have informed them that arrangements have been made to supply the alternative fuel, that is, LSHS. The Secretary, Ministry of Petroleum wrote letters to Mr. H. N. Sethna, Chairman, Tata Electric Company. It is dated June 1, 1992. It is no secret. I can refer to this letter. Sir, with your permission, I would quote the relevant protions of the letter. They read as follows:

> "As you are aware, ONGC is having to undertake rectificatory measures in the Bombay High field to restore the reservoir voidage balance. As part of these measures they are having to curtail production from the field to a level commensurate with voidage compensation. Unfortunately this will result in reduced supplies of gas to Uran. A large number of consuming units in Uran have no alternative fuel|feedstock and therefore curtailment of supplies of gas to them means curtailment of production. Fortunately Tata Electric's Trombay Thermal Power Station does have the alternate fuel capability. ONGC has therfore, proposed to curtail supplies to Tata Electric by one million cubic metres per day.
>
> As pointed out by you in your letter to my predecessor dated 19.5.1992 curtailment of supplies to the Trombay Plant by 1 MMSCMD would require an additional allocation of 30,000 tonnes per month of LSHS as substitute fuel. This Ministry has considered the matter and has decided that this additional supply of LSHS will be made availagle to Tata Electric from 1.7.1992. The concerned companies|agencies are being advised to take necessary action to make this additional LSHS available to Tata Electric. In the meantime, until 1.7.1992 ONGC will produce the requisite quantities of additional gas in order to meet the one MMSCMD of gas which is sought to be curtailed till it can be substituted by LSHS."

Now, having taken all these measures, we did not keep quiet at that. We informed the Chief Secretary, Maharashtra, also. It is not as though we have done it surruptitiously without anybody's knowledge, without informing anybody or without requesting the Tata Electric Company to make alternative arrangements. This is the position. I do not find any fault in curtailing the supply of gas only to the Tatas leaving the other consumers, under the circumstances. May I assure the House that I have not received any complaint from any corner regarding the reduction of generation of power on account of this. May be the Tata Electric Company are having their own problems of getting LSHS or meeting the additional financial requirements. Of course, they may have their grievances. But they cannot say that they have stopped generation of power and by such stopping of generation of power the public are suffering. Let us see to whom this power is given by the Tatas. The Tatas supply power to the Bombay Suburban Electricity System, the BSES and the BEST. Now, either from the BSES or from the BEST...(*Interruptions*).

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: It goes into the grid.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: It goes into the grid. But, mainly, we have not received any information from any corner that the generation of power in order to feed into the grid has stopped.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: I am giving you that information.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: We will definitely take action in that case. It is not that we want to make anybody, much less the public, suffer. We will not allow the public to suffer. We will definitely possible actions. I assure the House that we will not allow the public to suffer on account of anything which...(*Interruption*).

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Sir, will you permit me to speak for a minute? It will save your time also.

I am not charging the Ministry or the ONGC of reducing the supply of gas. My only query is, can you be positive as to when it could be restored? Secondly, as I mentioned, the LSHS supply of 110,000 tonnes per month would require certain actions on the part of the oil refineries and the railways that from October onwards when the demand will increase, the generation does not suffer. That is all.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: Without taking much time of the House, I can say that I respond positively to the suggestion made by the hon. Member. We will definitely try to find out ways and means to help the Tata Electric Company so that they generate power, as they were doing till now, by providing assistance and help wherever it is possible, either in obtaining LSHS or by improving the gas supply to them. But I won't be able to give a firm date. It will be my endeavour to see that the gas supply is maintained, as is committed, because 1.5 million cubic meters per day is the gas supply committed by us.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Now, it has come down to 0.60 lakh tonnes.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: Without contradicting the hon. Member, I will check up that. But it will take some time for the restoration of that gas supply. They were not only receiving the fullest quantity but they were receiving even above the committed supply. But we will see that this supply takes place because it is not only the Tatas, we have the other consumers also and it is in the interest of the country to see that the gas supply from Bombay High is restored as early as possible. There are various projects. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Do you export it to be restored within six months or one year?

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: I won't say this. We have taken up so many projects. I would say that within one year, we will try to improve the position and see that as much gas is supplied to them

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as is possible. But I won't say this year or that year. We have been supplying much more gas than they needed, even much more than the commitment made by us. In this case also, I will assure the hon. Member that we will do our best to help the Tata Electric Company.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): The Minister has given a categorical and convincing reply to the hon. Members questions. Now, Mr. Vishvjit Singh, do you want to ask some questions? Kindly be brief.

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH (Maharashtra): Yes, Sir. I will be very brief. First of all, I would like to impress upon the hon. Minister, let us understand the importance of the city of Bombay in the functioning of our economy before we go any further. Bombay provides a large proportion of all our taxes, whether it is income-tax or customs or excise or any tax. The goods which come into our country come through Bombay port. It is the people of Bombay who are the cogs of the industrial engine of this country and we cannot afford, under any circumstances, to allow any kind of disturbance in the electric supply to the city and to the city services, as you have seen it, to the BSES; the BEST and to the MESB grid, we cannot allow any curtailment of supply. It is a matter of shame for me to relate this incident. When I got elected from Bombay for the first time, I remember the day when I was sitting in Mr. Murli Deora's office and from the window of his office, you could see the gas being flared from Bombay High. Twelve years have passed since I got elected but even today, I can still stand there and see the same gas being flared. There are proposals of the Maharashtra Government which are pending with the Ministry and no action is being taken on them. If those proposals had been accepted by now, we would not have been in this problem.

Secondly, it is a shame that with such a vast amount of gas being flared, there is not enough gas available to supply to the city of Bombay. He has given an assurance in the House today that he would make sure that the supply of alternate fuel would be made available on an emergent basis so as not to curtail any supply of electricity to the company. Once again I would like to have an assurance from the Minister that he will make all efforts to see that it will be treated as the first priority. Let me assure you, Sir, it is something which should be taken as the first priority. Supply of alternate fuel should be given the first priority. If alternate fuel is not available, we will be in very serious trouble.

Thank you.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: Mr. Chairman, the hon. Member refers to his election from Bombay, I can only say he was already elected and he is rightly representing the interests of Bombay. Every week, every month, wherever I go, whenever I go to my constituency, I have to pass through Bombay. Anyway, I don't have any other mode. Perhaps I don't know whether the hon. Member has stayed in Bombay, but I have stayed in Bombay...

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Next time when you are in Bombay, I will see the power is switched off wherever you stay.

SHRI VISHVJIT P. SINGH: Next time he will stay with me since I am there.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: I don't think Viren Shah will refuse hospitality.

It is a fact that gas is being flared and it is not for the sake of fun. The House should know that gas is flared and it is associated gas that is flared, not free gas. When we are producing oil, along with it some gas is produced and that is also flared. For what? Because we don't have the facilities or the infrastructure to bring gas from off-shore to on-shore and that requires huge money. Fortunately, we have undertaken a project which is called Gas Firing Reduction, and we hope to bring this to zero level within a couple of years. We have taken up that

project. It is not that we have not taken up anything. We have been doing that very seriously to see that this gas which is burning before our eyes stops flaring and it is used by the consumers. The importance of Bombay, the revenue it fetches, its industrial infrastructure, it is not that I don't know all these things, it is not that I am unaware of these things, but it is also true that from the environmental point of view it is not good. Hon. Viren Shah has mentioned during the Question Hour about the congestion that Bombay is having. I stayed in Bombay during my college days, before Independence. Then Bombay was beautiful. Today I can't say that Bombay is beautiful because Bombay has become ugly because of the rush of industrialists. It is only to sabotage the Bombay environment. Today environmental hazard in Bombay is tremendous it is awful, and if somebody pleads even for additional industries based in Bombay, I am sorry, it should not be done. Industries should also see that pollution caused by them is controlled to the maximum. What I should say, is we are going to see that this gas which is burning in Bombay High comes to a zero level within a couple of years and the hon. Members will see that restoration of gas is done not only for Tatas because it happened in the early days, but others also are benefited by this. I can assure the hon. Members that we will take all steps...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Maharashtra Government has written to you.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Coordination with the railways is required in LSHS supply... *(Interruptions)*...

AN HON. MEMBER: We have been in constant dialogue.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: In the matter of LSHS you require the coordination of the railways.

SHRI B. SHANKARANAND: It is a matter of action and it is a suggestion that you are making. We will see what best we can do.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): Hon. Members, if you have questions to raise, you can do so because there is a Message to come from the Lok Sabha.

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: If you are asking me, I can make a speech for half-an-hour.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY): No, no, no. The Message has come.

MESSAGES FROM THE LOK SABHA

(I) The Copyright (Second Amendment) Bill, 1992.

(II) The Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Bill, 1991.

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report to the House the following messages received from the Lok Sabha, signed by the Secretary-General of the Lok Sabha:—

(I)

"I am directed to inform you that Lok Sabha at its sitting held on Wednesday, the 19th August, 1992, adopted the enclosed motion in regard to the Copyright (Second Amendment) Bill, 1992.

2. I am to request that the concurrence of Rajya Sabha in the said motion, and also the names of the members of Rajya Sabha appointed to the Joint Committee, may be communicated to this House."

MOTION

"That the Bill further to amend the Copyright Act, 1957, be referred to a Joint Committee of the Houses consisting of 45 members, 30 from this House, namely:—

1. Shri E. Ahamed